



CAWP

Election Watch

For immediate release
November 4, 2010

Contact: Debbie Walsh
732/932-9384, ext. 227
Dr. Susan Carroll
732/932-9384, ext. 235

Gender Gap Widespread in 2010 Elections: Women Less Likely than Men to Support Republican Candidates

Gender gaps in voting were evident in almost all 2010 U.S. Senate and gubernatorial races where exit polls were conducted by Edison Research, according to an analysis by the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. The gender gap – a measurable difference in the proportions of women and men who voted for the winning candidate – was at least as evident in 2010, a year of substantial Republican gains, as it was in 2008, a year when Democrats were elected in large numbers.

In each race where a gender gap was evident, women were more likely than men to support the Democratic candidate, and less likely to support the Republican. Gender gaps of 4 to 19 percentage points were evident in 17 of the 18 gubernatorial races where exit polls were conducted. Similarly, among the 26 U.S. Senate races with exit polls, gender gaps of 4 to 17 percentage points were evident in 25.

Susan J. Carroll, senior scholar at CAWP, observed, "The gender gap is certainly alive and well. In fact, it was more widespread in this election than in any other. Typically, we see gender gaps in about two-thirds of all statewide races. This year we saw gender gaps in all but a couple of contests."

Women and men expressed preferences for different candidates in four key U.S. Senate races:

- In Colorado, women preferred the winner, Democrat Michael Bennet, over Republican Ken Buck by a margin of 56% to 39%, while men opted for Buck (54% to 40%).
- In Pennsylvania, women preferred Democrat Joe Sestak to Republican Pat Toomey by a margin of 54% to 46% while men preferred the victorious Toomey to Sestak (56% to 44%).
- In Wisconsin, women chose Russ Feingold over Ron Johnson (52% to 48%) while men strongly supported the winning candidate Johnson over Feingold (56% to 42%).
- Similarly, in Illinois, women preferred Democrat Alexi Giannoulias to Republican Mark Kirk (49% to 46%) while men preferred the winner Kirk to Giannoulias (50% to 45%).

RUTGERS
THE STATE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW JERSEY

Center for American Women and Politics
Eagleton Institute of Politics
191 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8557
Phone: (732) 932-9384 • Fax: (732) 932-6778
www.cawp.rutgers.edu

In several key gubernatorial races won by Republicans in Ohio, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania, women were evenly divided between the two candidates or narrowly preferred the Democrat, while men showed a strong preference for the Republican.

The gender gap was evident in key races involving high-profile Republican women candidates, with women voters less likely than men to support the Republican woman.

- In South Carolina, governor-elect Nikki Haley won 49% of women's votes compared with 55% of men's.
- In the Nevada Senate race, losing Republican candidate Sharron Angle garnered 48% of men's votes but only 42% of women's.
- In California, losing gubernatorial candidate Meg Whitman won 45% of men's votes, but only 39% of women's.

According to CAWP director Debbie Walsh, "As we've seen in the past, the gender gap is about the parties of the candidates, not about their gender. It's not safe to assume that women will always prefer women candidates."

A 7 percentage-point gender gap was also apparent in U.S. House races. Nationally, 49% of women compared with 42% of men voted for the Democratic congressional candidate in their district; 48% of women compared with 55% of men voted for a Republican U.S. House candidate. Women split their votes about evenly between congressional candidates of the two parties, while men strongly preferred Republican candidates, resulting in an overall advantage for Republican candidates.

A table using exit poll data from Edison Research to illustrate gender differences in voting in the 2010 elections is attached to this release.

About CAWP

The Center for American Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey is a university-based research, education and public service center. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's changing relationship to politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. CAWP is a leading authority in its field and a respected bridge between the academic and political worlds.

###



CAWP

Election Watch

2010 Exit Poll Gender Data Gubernatorial Races

State	Candidate	Party	Overall	Women	Men	Gender Gap (% points)	Margin of Error
AR	Jim Keet	R	33	32	36	5	+/- 3
	Mike Beebe	D	65	67	62		
AZ	Jan Brewer	R	55	51	59	8	+/- 3
	Terry Goddard	D	42	46	38		
CA	Meg Whitman	R	41	39	45	4	+/- 2
	Jerry Brown	D	54	55	51		
CT	Tom Foley	R	49	44	51	7	+/- 4
	Dan Malloy	D	50	54	47		
FL	Rick Scott	R	49	45	54	9	+/- 3
	Alex Sink	D	48	52	43		
HI	Duke Aiona	R	41	32	49	19	+/- 6
	Neil Abercrombie	D	58	68	49		
IL	Bill Brady	R	46	44	48	4/5	+/- 3
	Pat Quinn	D	46	49	44		
IA	Terry Branstad	R	53	52	54	2	+/- 3
	Chet Culver	D	43	45	42		
NV	Brian Sandoval	R	53	50	57	7	+/- 2
	Rory Reid	D	41	46	37		
NH	John Stephen	R	46	39	51	12	+/- 3
	John Lynch	D	52	59	47		
NY	Carl Paladino	R	34	31	37	11	+/- 3
	Andrew Cuomo	D	62	67	56		
OH	John Kasich	R	49	47	52	5	+/- 3
	Ted Strickland	D	47	49	45		
OR	Chris Dudley	R	48	37	59	13	+/- 5
	Jon Kitzhaber	D	49	62	37		
PA	Tom Corbett	R	55	50	59	9	+/- 3
	Dan Onorato	D	45	50	41		
TX	Rick Perry	R	55	53	57	4	+/- 3
	Bill White	D	42	45	40		
SC	Nikki Haley	R	51	49	55	6	+/- 3
	Vincent Sheheen	D	47	50	43		
VT	Brian Dubie	R	48	46	51	5	+/- 5
	Peter Shumlin	D	49	51	46		
WI	Scott Walker	R	52	48	57	9	+/- 3
	Tom Barrett	D	47	51	52		

Note: These figures are from exit polls conducted by Edison Research for the National Election Pool.

* The gender gap shown for each poll in the table is based on the responses for the winning candidate. Contest winners are bolded where results are final.



CAWP

Election Watch

2010 Exit Poll Gender Data U.S. Senate Contests

State	Candidate	Party	Overall	Men	Women	Gender Gap (% points)	Margin of Error
AR	John Boozman	R	58	61	56	5	+/- 3
	Blanche Lincoln	D	37	34	40		
AZ	John McCain	R	59	62	57	5	+/- 3
	Rodney Glassman	D	35	31	38		
CA	Carly Fiorina	R	42	46	39	6	+/- 2
	Barbara Boxer	D	52	49	55		
CO	Kenneth Buck	R	47	54	39	16	+/- 5
	Michael Bennet	D	48	40	56		
CT	Linda McMahon	R	44	45	39	8	+/- 4
	Richard Blumenthal	D	54	52	60		
DE	Christine O'Donnell	R	40	45	36	10	+/- 4
	Chris Coons	D	56	51	61		
HI	Campbell Cavasso	R	21	28	15	14	+/- 7
	Dan Inouye	D	75	68	82		
IA	Chuck Grassley	R	65	66	62	4	+/- 3
	Roxanne Conlin	D	33	32	36		
IL	Mark Kirk	R	48	50	46	4	+/- 3
	Alexi Giannoulias	D	46	45	49		
IN	Brad Ellsworth	D	40	37	43	7	+/- 3
	Dan Coats	R	55	58	51		
KY	Rand Paul	R	56	60	51	9	+/- 4
	Jack Conway	D	44	39	49		
LA	David Vitter	R	57	57	56	1	+/- 3
	Charlie Melancon	D	38	38	37		
MO	Roy Blunt	R	54	59	50	9	+/- 4
	Robin Carnahan	D	41	36	45		
NH	Kelly Ayotte	R	60	65	55	10	+/- 3
	Paul Hodes	D	37	31	43		
NV	Sharron Angle	R	45	48	42	7	+/- 2
	Harry Reid	D	50	46	53		
NY	Jay Townsend	R	33	39	27	12	+/- 4
	Chuck Schumer	D	65	59	71		
NY	Joseph DioGuardi	R	37	43	30	13	+/- 4
	Kirsten Gillibrand	D	61	55	68		
OH	Rob Portman	R	57	61	54	7	+/- 3
	Lee Fisher	D	39	36	42		
OR	Jim Huffman	R	41	47	34	17	+/- 5
	Ron Wyden	D	56	49	64		
PA	Pat Toomey	R	51	56	46	10	+/- 3
	Joe Sestak	D	49	44	54		

State	Candidate	Party	Overall	Men	Women	Gender Gap (% points)	Margin of Error
SC	Jim DeMint	R	63	64	60	4	+/- 3
	Alvin Greene	D	28	25	31		
VT	Len Britton	R	31	34	28	6	+/- 5
	Patrick Leahy	D	64	61	67		
WA	Dino Rossi	R	50	52	44	8/9	+/- 4
	Patty Murray	D	50	46	55		
WI	Ron Johnson	R	52	56	48	8	+/- 3
	Russ Feingold	D	47	42	52		
WV	John Raese	R	43	46	41	5	+/- 4
	Joe Manchin	D	54	51	56		

Note: These figures are from exit polls conducted by Edison Research for the National Election Pool.

* The gender gap shown for each poll in the table is based on the responses for the winning candidate. Contest winners are bolded where results are final.